

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 18887 01 OF 02 141513Z
ACTION H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1605

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE/ECJ2

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 18887

TEHRAN FOR CODEL PRICE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP (PRICE, MELVIN)

SUBJECT: CODEL PRICE MEETING WITH DEPUTY PM MINWAR GAMASY

1. SUMMARY: CODEL PRICE MET WITH DEPUTY PM AND MINWAR GAMASY AND THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF HIS RESPONSES TO THEIR QUESTIONS:
THE SOVIET UNION PUT TOO MANY WEAPONS IN THE HANDS OF THE IRRESPONSIBLE LIBYAN LEADER. THE USSR IS ATTEMPTING TO MAKE A BELT AROUND EGYPT CONSISTING OF LIBYA, CHAD, NIGER AND ETHIOPIA SO THAT EGYPT WILL BECOME COMPLETELY ISOLATED. EGYPT EXPelled THE SOVIETS BECAUSE THEY FAILED TO REPLACE OCTOBER 1973 WAR LOSSES. THE EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES IS AT ABOUT THE SAME LEVEL AS IT WAS IN 1973 WHILE ISREAL IS MUCH STRONGER. ISREAL IS SUPERIOR IN AIR POWER. EGYPT DOES NOT EXPECT ISREAL TO USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS UNLESS THEIR STATE IS ABOUT TO BE DESTROYED. THE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IN THE SINAI IS VERY SUCCESSFUL. THE YEAR 1978 WILL BE DECISIVE AS TO WHETHER THERE IS WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST OR NOT. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE IF

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 18887 01 OF 02 141513Z

GENEVA MEETS AND FAILS OR IT DOES NOT MEET AT ALL, THE RESULTS ARE THE SAME. END OF SUMMARY.

2. CODEL PRICE MET WITH THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER MINWAR GENERAL GAMASY AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE 1000 HOURS 12 NOVEMBER 1977. THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF CODEL'S QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS BY GENERAL GAMASY:

(A) AFTER AN INTRODUCTORY EXCHANGE BY CHAIRMAN PRICE AND GENERAL GAMASY, REPRESENTATIVE WILSON ASKED THE QUESTION: WOULD YOU PLEASE TELL US ABOUT THE SITUATION IN LIBYA? GENERAL GAMASY RESPONDED: WE HAD GOOD RELATIONS WITH LIBYA - HISTORICALLY WE HAD GOOD RELATIONS WITH PRESIDENT QADAFY - BUT THEN HE THOUGHT HE SHOULD CONTROL OUR COUNTRY AND HE SENT SABOTAGE TEAMS TO EGYPT. REP WILSON THEN ASKED: WHY DID HE DO THAT? ANSWER: ANY MILITARY LEADER WANTS TO CONTROL THE AREA; HE MUST IMPOSE HIS WILL ON OTHER COUNTRIES - TO BE A GOOD LEADER. HE STARTED WITH US BECAUSE HE KNEW WE WERE ECONOMICALLY WEAK - BUT HE DIDN'T SUCCEED. HE HAS SO MUCH MONEY AND HAS PURCHASED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM THE SOVIET UNION. THE LAST CONTRACT HE MADE WITH THE USSR WAS FOR \$3,750 MILLION AND WAS PAID CASH IN ADVANCE. HE WILL HAVE MUCH MORE EQUIPMENT THAN HE CAN USE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. THE USSR HAS PUT WEAPONS IN THE HANDS OF AN IRRESPONSIBLE PERSON IN AN ATTEMPT TO CONTROL THE FLOW OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT INTO AFRICA. THE LIBYANS ARE HELPING ETHIOPIA AND THOSE INVOLVED IN THE DESERT CONFLICT BETWEEN ALGERIA AND MOROCCO.

(B) REP HOLT THEN ASKED: WHAT IS YOUR SITUATION REGARDING WEAPONS AND SUPPLIES FROM THE USSR? ANSWER: THE USSR STOPPED SHIPPING MILITARY EQUIPMENT AFTER THE OCTOBER WAR. WE THEN HAD TO START BUYING FROM FRANCE, THE U.K. AND AS YOU KNOW WE PURCHASED 6 C-130 AIRCRAFT FROM THE USA. ALSO, WE MANUFACTURE SPARE PARTS IN EGYPT, AND WE HAVE PARTS MADE ELSEWHERE. WE HAVE GOTTEN SOME LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 CAIRO 18887 01 OF 02 141513Z

EQUIPMENT AND SPARE PARTS FROM COUNTRIES SUCH AS: NORTH KOREA, ROMANIA, YUGOSLAVIA, AND THEY HAVE THE SAME TYPES OF EQUIPMENT AS DOES EGYPT. WE HAVE SOLVED ALL THE PROBLEMS OF SPARE PARTS AND EQUIPMENT EXCEPT FOR THE AIR FORCE. IN THAT CONTEXT WE ARE GETTING HELP FROM WESTERN COUNTRIES. REP HOLT THEN ASKED: WHAT ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE USSR IN GENEVA? WE CANNOT IGNORE THE USSR. THEY ARE ONE OF THE HEADS OF THE CONFERENCE AND WILL PLAY A ROLE IN THE CONFERENCE - AND WE THINK THEY WILL PLAY A GOOD ROLE.

(C) REP WHITE ASKED: WHAT IS THE POLICY OF THE USSR IN AFRICA? ANSWER: THE USSR IS TRYING TO MAKE A BELT WHICH INCLUDES LIBYA, CHAD, NIGER, ETHIOPIA. THEY HAVE ONLY SUCCEEDED WITH LIBYA AND ETHIOPIA, AND THEY HAVE FAILED IN ZAIRE. WE ARE NOT WORRIED ABOUT LIBYA BECAUSE WE CAN TAKE OF THEM, AND THEREFORE THE USSR WILL NOT SUCCEED IN ISOLATING EGYPT. THE USSR WILL DEFINITELY NOT BE ABLE TO ISOLATE US AND THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CONTROL THE SUDAN - WE WILL USE OUR LAST ROUND OF AMMUNITION TO HELP PROTECT THE SUDAN. AMERICA SHOULD BE MORE ACTIVE IN AFRICA - MORE ACTIVE BY GIVING A MINIMUM OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO THE FRIENDLY COUNTRIES SO THAT THEY CAN DEFEND THEMSELVES. THEY NEED SMALL ARMS, AMMUNITION AND SOME ARTILLERY AS WELL AS A FEW HELICOPTERS. THEY NEED MILITARY

ASSISTANCE BECAUSE THEY ARE VERY POOR AND CANNOT AFFORD TO BUY THESE WEAPONS. AS TO WHICH COUNTRIES YOU SHOULD HELP EACH ONE MUST BE DISCUSSED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS.

(D) REP DICKINSON ASKED: IT IS DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHICH COUNTRY
S
TO HELP. CAN YOU MAKE ANY SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW WE CAN TELL WHICH ONES ARE OUR FRIENDS? ANSWER: IT WILL HAVE TO BE DECIDED BY YOU ON AN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY BASIS. POSSIBLY YOU CAN HELP THEM ECONOMICALLY AND LET FRANCE SEE THEM SOME MILITARY EQUIPMENT. MAYBE YOU CAN GIVE THEM SOME SMALL ARMS.

(E) REP WILSON ASKED: IS EGYPT HELPING AFRICAN COUNTRIES? ANSWER
:
AS I SAID, THE USSR IS TRYING TO MAKE A BELT TO ISOLATE EGYPT. BUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 CAIRO 18887 01 OF 02 141513Z

THEY WILL NOT SUCCEED. THE BELT WOULD BE LIBYA, NIGER, CHAD, ZAIRE AND ETHIOPIA. EGYPT IS HELPING SOMALIA AS THEIR EQUIPMENT IS ALL SOVIET MANUFACTURED AND IS SIMILAR TO EGYPT'S. WE HELPED ZAIRE AND WE ARE READY TO HELP FRIENDLY COUNTRIES AROUND EGYPT. WE HAVE HELPED ONLY WITH SMALL ARMS AND AMMUNITION AS WE DON'T HAVE TANKS AND ARTILLERY THAT WE CAN GIVE TO THEM.

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 18887 02 OF 02 141622Z
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 18887

TEHRAN FOR CODEL PRICE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS. OREP (PRICE, MELVIN)

SUBJECT: CODEL PRICE MEETING WITH DEPUTY PM MINWAR GAMASY

(F) REP DELLUMS ASKED: IS EGYPT STRONGER THAN IT WAS IN 1973?
ANSWER: NO, WE ARE NOT STRONGER. POSSIBLY IN THE GROUND FORCES,
YES, BUT OVERALL, NO. I CAN SAY THAT WITH THE ARMS WE NOW HAVE WE
CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION BUT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT ISRAEL HAS
MILITARY SUPERIORITY. IT IS NOT CORRECT TO COMPARE THE STRENGTH
OF ALL ARAB COUNTRIES. BY TBY THAT I MEAN THAT IS NOT PROPER TO
COUNT THE FORCES OF ALGERIA, MOROCCO AND LIBYA, AS WELL AS SUCH
COUNTRIES AS SAUDI ARABIA IN THE TOTAL FOR THE ARAB SIDE. IT IS
JUST NOT REALISTIC. HOWEVER, COUNTING EGYPT, SURIA, AND JORDAN,
THEN ISRAEL IS SUPERIOR. ISRAEL IS PARTICULARLY SUPERIOR IN AIR
POWER.

(G) REP NEDZI ASKED: WHAT IS YOUR STATUS OF READINESS? ANSWER:

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 18887 02 OF 02 141622Z

WE ARE COMPLETELY READY TO ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION. ISRAEL THINKS THAT
THEY CAN DESTROY US IN THREE WEEKS BUT THAT IS NOT TRUE - THE LESSONS
OF OCTOBER WAR TAUGHT US THAT ISRAEL IS NOT SO SUPERIOR.

(H) REP BYRON ASKED: ARE YOU SAYING THAT EGYPT HAS NO PLANS FOR
WAR? ANSWER: ALL COUNTRIES WITH AN ARMED FORCE HAVE PLANS FOR
WAR, AND WE HAVE PLANS AND ARE READY. WE WANT PEACE AND WE DON'T
HAVE ANY AGGRESSIVE PLANS. EVERYTHING WILL BECOME CLEAR IN 1978 WHETHER
WE HAVE WAR OR PEACE. I AM SAYING THAT IT WILL BECOME 100 PER CENT CLEAR
WITHIN THE YEAR 1978. GENEVA IS THE MAIN FACTOR. IF THE NEGOTIATIONS
FAIL THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO WAR. IF THE CONFERENCE IS NOT
CONVENED OR IT IS HELD AND FAILS, THE RESULT WILL BE THE SAME.
WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR FIVE YEARS THAD THAT IS ENOUGH. HOWEVER, THE
WAR MAY NOT START IN 1978 BUT WE WILL KNOW IF THERE WILL BE WAR IN
1978.

(I) REP ANNUNZIO ASKED: WHY SHOULD THE USSR WANT GENEVA TO
SUCCEED? ANSWER: I AGREE THAT FOR THE USSR THE BEST SITUATION WOULD
BE FOR GENEVA TO FAIL, HOWEVER WE WILL NOT LET THEM STOP A
SETTLEMENT.

(J) REP MEEDS ASKED: WHAT IS THE PERCENTAGE OF YOUR GNP THAT YOU
SPEND ON DEFENSE? ANSWER: IT IS DIFFICULT TO ANSWER AS I
DON'T HAVE THE STATISTICS AVAILABLE. HOWEVER, WE ARE SPENDING LESS
THAN ISREAL AND WE ARE SPENDING ABOUT THE SAME AS 1973 LEVEL. WE

ARE BUYING MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM WESTERN COUNTRIES BUT OTHER FRIEND

LY

ARAB COUNTRIES ARE PAYING FOR US BECAUSE WE ARE POOR. QUESTION:

WHAT IS OMORE IMPORTANT TO YOU - YOUR LAND OR THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM

?

ANSWER: WE WANT OUR LAND FIRST OF ALL, SYRIA ALSO WANTS THE GOLAN

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PAGE 03 CAIRO 18887 02 OF 02 141622Z

HEIGHTS' AND JORDAN THE WEST BANK TOO AS A FIRST PRIORITY, BUT THE
PROBLEM IS NOT SOLVED WITHOUT SOLVING THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.

(K) REP WHITE ASKED: WOULD OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES ATTACK ISREAL
WITHOUT EGYPT ANSWER: NO, I DON'T THINK SO. SINCE EGYPT IS THE
MAIN FORCE I DON'T BELIEVE THAT OTHERS WOULD GO TO WAR WITHOUT
EGYPT. THERE MUST BE COOPERATIONS BETWEEN SYRIA AND EGYPT.

(I) REP WHITE THEN ASKED: WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD
CAUSE YOU TO GO TO WAR? ANSWER: IF WE DONT GET OUR LAND LIBERATED
YOU CAN BE SURE WE WILL GO TO WAR.

(M) REP WHITE ASKED: ARE THERE ANY WEAKNESSES OF THE USSR THAT
YOU COULD TELL US ABOUT WHICH COULD BE EXPLOITED? AND WHY DID YOU
PUSH THE USSR OUT OF EGYPT? ANSWER: WE EXPELLED THE SOVIETS BECAUSE
THEY REFUSED TO REPLACE OUT OCTOBER WAR LOSSES. WE WOULD STILL BE
DEALING WITH THEM IF THEY HAD BEEN WILLING TO REPLACE THE WAR LOSSES.
SYRIA IS STILL DEALING WITH THE SOVIETS BUT THERE ARE PROBLEMS.

(N) REP WHITE ASKED: IF THEY OFFERED NOW TO REPLACE YOUR
WAR LOSSES WOULD YOU ACCEPT? ANSWER: NO, NOT NOW FOR MANY REASONS,
MAINLY POLITICAL.

(O) REP DELLUMS: ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE EARLY WARNING
SYSTEM IN THE SINAI? ANSWER: THE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IS VERY
SUCCESSFUL. WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE AMERICANS WORKING FOR BOTH
SIDES. IT GIVES US A GOOD EXPERIENCE WHICH HELPS US TO HAVE
CONFIDENCE TO ACCEPT AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IN ANY BUFFER ZONES IN
FUTURE PEACE SETTLEMENTS.

(P) REP DELLUMS ASKED: DO YOU EXPECT ISRAEL TO USE
TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE FUTURE? ANSWER: ISRAEL HAS THE
CAPABILITY TO MAKE NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND MAY EVEN HAVE SOME WEAPONS,
HOWEVER WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THEY WILL NOT USE THEM UNLESS THEY
ARE AFRAID THEIR STATE IS GOING TO BE DESTROYED.

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PAGE 04 CAIRO 18887 02 OF 02 141622Z

3. THE CODEL WAS WARMLY RECEIVED BY GENERAL GAMASY AND THE MEMBERS INDICATED AFTER THE MEETING THAT THEY BELIEVED THE MEETING WAS VERY INFORMATIVE AND THAT GENERAL GAMASY HAD BEEN VERY FRANK AND OPEN WITH THE DELEGATION.

4. THEIR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AT THE BARRAGES FOLLOWING THE MEETING WITH GENERAL GAMASY REPORTED BY SEP TEL. (CAIRO 18863)

5. CODEL PRICE WAS BRIEFED BY THE AMBASSADOR AND DEFENSE ATTACHE AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE ON 11 NOVEMBER FOLLOWED BY A RECEPTION AT THE RESIDENCE.

6. SAID MAR'I, SPEAKER OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY, AND MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY HOSTED A RECEPTION FOR CODEL PRICE EVENING 12 NOVEMBER AT WHICH TIME INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS HAD QUITE LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS.

7. CODEL DEPARTED CAIRO FOR TEHRAN AT 0905 (0705) GMT 13 NOVEMBER. INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS STATED TO AMBASSADOR AND CONTROL OFFICER THAT THEY BELIEVED THE CAIRO PORTION OF THEIR VISIT HAS BEEN FRUITFUL AND INFORMATIVE. THE CODEL LEFT NO PENDING REQUESTS WITH EMBASSY.

8. ABOVE WRITTEN AFTER CODEL PRICE DEPARTED AND IS SUBJECT TO ANY CHANGES CODEL MAY DESIRE TO MAKE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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Enclosure: n/a
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Expiration:
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